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for the Behavioral and Social Sciences

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The Soldier Salesperson: Selection and Basic Recruiter Training Issues in the U.S. Army

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U.S. Army Research Institute

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This report is the last of five reports that document a program on recruiter productivity. This document presents the consolidated results and expands on research for an Army recruiter selection program analysis and a basic recruiter training program evaluation. A brief overview of each project is provided, as are recommendations for future practices.

Results reported in this document are drawn from documents, interviews, and data collected from October 1987 through April 1989 at the U.S. Army Recruiting Command, Fort Sheridan, IL, and at the Recruiting and Retention School, Fort Harrison, IN. This research focused on improving recruiter productivity and investigated the potential of the Recruiter Selection Battery - Experimental (RSB-X) to predict performance on-the-job and in training. The project also investigated the quality of the formal school training provided to new recruiters.

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FOREWORD

Research on both Army recruiter selection and the basic recruiter training program was conducted during 1987 and 1988 by the Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences (ARI). This report is the last of a series of five reports that document these research efforts. This report consolidates and expands on previous data about recruiter selection and training methods. First, the report discusses possible predictors of recruiter success of interest to the military for a number of years. In particular, this evaluation of previously developed recruiter selection scales emphasizes the lack of usefulness for recruiter selection testing programs because of the limited availability of soldiers for recruiting duty. Second, this report addresses training issues related to developing recruiters' skills and productivity. Last, the report contains recommendations for recruiting operations and training policymakers to guide future research efforts in these areas.

ARI's participation in this cooperative effort is part of an ongoing research program designed to enhance the quality of Army personnel. This work is an essential part of the mission of ARI's Manpower and Personnel Policy Research group (MPPRG) to conduct research to improve the Army's ability to effectively and efficiently recruit its personnel. This research was undertaken in 1987 under a Memorandum of Understanding between USAREC and ARI (31 July 1987), with project completion in the Fall, 1988. The selection research results reported here were briefed to the Deputy Commander (East) and other Command Staff of USAREC on 21 November 1988. Many of the training program results were briefed to the Director of the Recruiting and Retention School on 19 September 1988 and to USAREC on 28 September 1988.

EDGAR M. JOHNSON
Technical Director

THE SOLDIER SALESPERSON: SELECTION AND BASIC RECRUITER TRAINING ISSUES IN THE U.S. ARMY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Requirement:

Effective selection and training of recruiters is essential to the success of the recruitment function. Two programs were developed to meet these objectives: (1) The Recruiter Selection Battery - Experimental (RSB-X) was developed as one potential aid in the prediction of recruiter success, and (2) the Army Recruiter Course (ARC) was developed to provide selected soldiers with basic recruiter training. The present research (1) assesses the relationships between RSB-X elements and recruiter performance, and (2) determines if changes in the ARC could improve recruiter success.

Procedure:

For the selection component, performance and personal characteristics data were collected from USAREC data bases. This data collection resulted in indexes of recruiter performance for 1986 and 1987. The relationships among RSB-X elements and these indexes were assessed.

For the training component, the ARC was subjected to a comprehensive program evaluation that included on-site observation of all classes, audits of records, and surveys of both present students and instructors and past ARC graduates assigned as field recruiters.

Results:

The usefulness of tests for selecting field recruiters is minimal. No further efforts to develop such tests is recommended until such time as (1) the recruiter occupational specialty is perceived as being highly desirable, and (2) only a small proportion of total candidates need be selected.

The Army Recruiter Course is perceived as highly effective in implementing the assigned program of instruction. The course is rated positively by students (past and present) and by instructors assigned to the school. The on-the-job training

program presumed to supplement and build on the ARC content is not being effectively implemented.

Utilization of Findings:

The results of this research provide valuable information about both the recruiter selection and initial skill training processes. The Recruiting and Retention School has initiated changes in the Army Recruiter Course to improve realism and provide more examples of good and poor performance. A data base of training, performance, and RSB-X elements now exists with which additional analyses may be done to investigate recruiter success issues. As the lack of utility in using selection tests has been presented, attention should now be focused on developing methods for improving skills and retaining recruiters. The development of training programs for new recruiters needs further investigation. The on-the-job training program is not providing new recruiters with the essential practical training needed to be successful and outside influences may be affecting the usefulness of any existing or new training strategies.

THE SOLDIER SALESPERSON: SELECTION AND BASIC RECRUITER TRAINING ISSUES IN THE U.S. ARMY

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The Soldier Salesperson: Selection and Basic Recruiter Training Issues in the U.S. Army

Introduction

Effective selection and training of sales personnel are essential to the success of the recruitment function. This report summarizes what we know from recent research are key issues in building an effective recruiting force. We summarize results of two recent research projects conducted under the direction of the U.S. Army Research Institute (ARI) that focused on the initial selection for duty in the U.S. Army Recruiting Command (USAREC) and the basic formalized training provided during the six-week Army Recruiter Course (ARC) conducted at Fort Benjamin Harrison. In addition, information obtained from earlier recruiter productivity research projects is included as appropriate.

The Armed Forces are constrained in their recruiting sales activities by a variety of laws and regulations that make the Truth in Lending Act disclosures and Equal Employment Opportunity compliance paperwork seem trivial by comparison. These individual sales forces must compete primarily within a market of 16- to 24-year-old youth. The ideal employment candidate is a physically-fit youth who has had no law violations, who possesses a high school diploma and who mentally compares to the top 50% of the nation. The product to be sold to these very qualified youth in lieu of civilian employment or going directly to college is an enlistment contract for a specific period of time that has incentives such as the Armed Forces absorbing 100% of all training costs, paying a monthly salary (even during training), providing full medical benefits, and allowing 30 days paid vacation. Recruiters must interest youth and maintain their interest through a complicated qualification and application procedure that involves multiple choices of options that depend upon the individual's qualifications and the service's needs.

It has long been said in private industry that the best sales personnel self-select into such jobs. Having dealt with the hiring of sales personnel in the past, the majority of individuals I have interviewed reported that they were working in sales because their salaries were directly linked to their own abilities and effort and that their success was measured by how much money they make. The more they sold, the more they earned. Sales personnel in the Armed Forces (the recruiters) have no such opportunities for direct monetary rewards based on sales success. Success is measured by their recruiting youth who enter into active duty. Success will not guarantee promotion, with its related salary increase, but the lack of success will generally have a negative effect on the careers and lives of such recruiters.

Selection for Recruiting Assignment

The U.S. Army does not presently utilize a selection test for assignment to recruiting duty. Although the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps had such a test developed (the Special Assignment Battery (SAB)), they also do not use the instrument for recruiting assignment purposes. Although many soldiers volunteer for Army recruiting duty assignments, the majority of Army recruiter job vacancies are filled by the Department of the Army (DA) assignment process.

DA selected Army recruiters who do not permanently convert their Primary Military Occupational Specialty (PMOS) to 00R must compete for promotion with their peers who are still working and learning in their original work specialty. The U.S. Army Recruiting Command reported that approximately 30 percent of recruiters failed to make their assigned monthly missions during 1988 (A.W. Parcells, personal communication, August, 1988). Considering the ramifications to a person's career in the U.S. Army, it is not difficult to understand why many successful soldiers do not generally self-select (or volunteer) into the recruiter job. Further, it is not difficult to understand why many field recruiters will not convert to the 00R specialty (Inn & Adams, 1988).

During the DA assignment process as specified in Army Regulation 601-1, successful soldiers in any Military Occupational Specialty may be selected for assignment to USAREC. In theory, all soldiers who meet certain prerequisites (e.g., holding the rank of E-5 or above, sufficient time in service, acceptable GT scores, and age) should be considered for recruiting duty assignments. Over 2,000 selected and volunteer soldiers have been sent to the ARC at Fort Benjamin Harrison for each of the last four years.

In actuality, many successful soldiers are determined to be not eligible for recruiting assignment each year. Those soldiers who are not eligible for a Permanent Change of Station, those who are reported as having money management difficulties, and those who do not receive a favorable local Commander's evaluation are among the most frequent reasons that soldiers are determined to be ineligible. Personnel branch specialists responsible for nominating prospective recruiters report that a number of soldiers whose personnel records reflect individuals who appear highly successful in their jobs (as measured by performance appraisals and promotions) are not given acceptable evaluations for recruiting duty by their local Commanders. It has been suggested that some Commanders may not recommend some highly successful members of their Commands for recruiting duty, thus insuring that soldiers are not lost to them or have their careers adversely affected during the recruiting assignment.

This situation has suggested to some individuals within the Army that a selection process should be developed that includes an assessment tool for identifying recruiter talent from among all soldiers who are eligible. This tool (or selection battery) might be administered to all soldiers at the time they re-enlist for a second tour of duty with the Army or it could be used as a final screener before assignment to the Army Recruiter Course. Although the logic for such an assessment measure seems compelling, there has been little substantive research accomplished to date that supports the effectiveness of a recruiter selection test. To be effective as an Army selection device, such an instrument would need to meet three basic criteria. First, the instrument would have to be moderately valid in its ability to predict both school and on-the-job performance. Second, the instrument would have to be relatively inexpensive to administer, particularly if administered to all soldiers who re-enlist at locations around the world. Last, the instrument should demonstrate acceptable utility over existing methods.

Recruiter Selection Validity Research

The military has sought the "best" measures for selecting personnel for more than four decades. Typical research strategies have focused on administering a series of predictor measures to samples of soldiers and assessing their performance. Most studies have used a concurrent validation strategy in which the predictors were administered to recruiters who were already on the job at roughly the same point in time that the criterion measures were obtained. Criterion measures have typically included both supervisory and peer ratings of performance as well as various sources of production data such a monthly contracts written, Mission Box accomplishment (filling vacancies with specifically assigned mixes of applicant gender, educational qualifications, mental ability, etc.), and "quality" mission after losses from the Delayed Entry Program (DEP) pool.

Extant research has tended to focus on only one of these criteria for any given predictor set. Definition of the most appropriate criterion can change with the policies set forth and the staff assigned at any given point in time. In a recent recruiter selection battery investigation (Weiss, 1988), the appropriateness of performance criteria that were established and approved by the research sponsors in the Spring of 1988 was questioned in Fall of the same year.

Ratings and nomination. Among relevant research conducted to validate various sales personnel selection instruments in the military, few (if any) have resulted in stable validities on which one would want to base a multi-million dollar selection program. Commanding Officer nominations and supervisor ratings

have been used as criteria for a Navy recruiter selection battery (including predictors of recruiting activities interests, fluency of expression, aptitude, and Navy knowledge) with disappointing results (Wollack and Kipnis, 1960). Personality and biographical data were used to predict whether recruiters were rated by Commanders as being in the top or bottom half of their peer group as to overall performance (Krug, 1972). Again, results were disappointing and actual validities questionable. Other researchers continued to search for a predictive instrument using various forms of supervisory ratings with what this author feels was marginal success at best (e.g., Abrahams, Neumann, and Rimland, 1973; Brown, Wood, and Harris, 1975; Graf and Brower, 1976; Borman, Hough, and Dunnette, 1976; Borman, Toquam, and Rosse, 1979; Borman, Rosse, and Abrahams, 1980; and Borman, Rosse, and Rose, 1983). Aggregating across all sales selection research using recruiter performance ratings and peer nominations, validities are marginal to low and thus of questionable utility to sales selection test developers. Average validities in the magnitude of .20 or lower are found for most of these research attempts.

Production data. Military recruiters primarily exist to maintain the operating strengths of the various services that are set forth by Congress. Attrition of existing service men and women is included in a yearly recruiting mission assigned to each service. The U.S. Armed Forces are somewhat unique in their recruiting strategies (compared to other allied nations) in that each recruiter's performance on the job is evaluated by his or her own personal ability to achieve monthly assigned contract missions. Many nations work mostly using team concepts in which an entire station is responsible for a contract mission (McMenemy, 1987). The assignment of individual contract production missions may lead to a reluctance to help others meet their goals and individual recruiters may be disinterested in answering questions or assisting potential recruits who are being processed by other recruiters.

Previous research using production data as criterion measures for paper and pencil predictors has been conducted back to the 1940's. Brogden and Taylor (1949) employed the average number of recruits per hour that recruiters brought onto active duty as a criterion which resulted in a test validity coefficient of .18. The recruiter's geographic location has long been argued as a limiting factor in the measurement of production. Unfortunately, Russell (1987) reports that results from research conducted by Larriva found that based on cross-validities, prediction equations based on adjustments for geographic mix were better at predicting the performance criteria than actual production. Research by Weiss, Citera, and Finfer (1989) was also more successful in predicting awards (that are based on production) than actual contract production.

The Army has examined the potential for a recruiter selection instrument for many years. During the early 1980's, Army researchers and contractors worked on the assessment center concept as a possible device for selecting recruiters who would be successful in the recruiter training course (Borman, 1982). Piloted at the Army's recruiter training facility at Ft. Benjamin Harrison, respectable validity indices were obtained between assessment center exercises and success during the training course. Training course success was (and still is) largely dependent on individuals' role playing and communication skills, two dimensions that the assessment center process seems ideal for evaluating. Actual implementation of the assessment center was curtailed in part due to the operating costs of such a program and the assignment of non-volunteers to recruiting duty. At least one element of the assessment center still exists at the school today as a telephone exercise during the first days of the course used for personal evaluations of student needs.

Recruiter Selection Battery - Experimental

Although the assessment center approach was not implemented, a few years later an experimental selection battery, the Recruiter Selection Battery - Experimental (RSB-X) was developed as a potential aid in the identification of Army personnel with characteristics predictive of effective recruiting performance. This most recently developed instrument was based on the Navy Special Assignment Battery and contained the following measures:

1. Descriptive Statement List - A list of 100 statements about what a person does, thinks, or feels. People are asked to decide if each statement is true or false for them;

2. Adjective Checklist - A list of 95 adjectives for which the respondent is asked to indicate if each adjective is or is not descriptive of him or her;

3. Most Descriptive Adjective Checklist - A list of 45 pairs of traits for which the respondent is asked to indicate the most descriptive trait; and

4. Background Questionnaire - A total of 137 questions concerning things a person may have done or experienced in the past. The person filling out the questionnaire is asked to select the most appropriate choice for each question.

The first three components of the RSB-X are composed of subscales of the following traditional personality scales:

1. Personality Research Form (PRF) (Jackson, 1967);

2. California Psychological Inventory (CPI) (Gough, 1969);

3. Differential Personality Questionnaire (DPQ) (Telegen, 1976);

4. Self Description Inventory (SDI) (Ghiselli, 1954); and

5. Sales Effectiveness Scale (Dunnette, 1976).

This battery, along with other measures of recruiter characteristics (i.e., Computer Adaptive Screening Test (CAST) and the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE)), was administered to a group of 417 recruiters who entered the Army Recruiting Course (ARC) at Fort Benjamin Harrison during the months of May and June, 1985.

During 1987 and 1988, research was conducted to determine if any of the measures contained in this instrument correlated with existing USAREC performance criteria (Weiss et al, 1989). Performance and personal characteristics data were collected from U.S. Army databases. This data collection resulted in the following indices of recruiter performance for 1986 and 1987: (1) total recruits signed (Total Achievement), (2) total performance against individual mission (Total Production), (3) total recruits who dropped out of the Delayed Entry Program (Total DEP Loss), (4) achievement against key recruiter categories (Key Achievement), (5) performance against mission in key categories (Key Production), and (6) DEP Loss in key categories (Key DEP Loss). Awards data for 1986 and 1987 were also collected for currently active recruiters as was the USAREC assignment status of all recruiters in the sample (Weiss, 1988).

The relationships among RSB-X elements and these criteria were then assessed. The overall ability of these elements to predict performance was generally weak. Personality components showed very few significant, substantive, or replicable relationships with the performance indices. Background data was not generally predictive of either performance or assignment status although a few relationships allowed for a tentative profile of the productive and active recruiter. Overall validity estimates for the battery fluctuated around .20, similar to many other attempts to develop such a selection battery.

In addition to production data, ARC school performance scores, CAST predictors of Armed Forces Qualifications Test (AFQT) and TABE scores were also used to predict recruiter performance. No consistent relationships were found for these ability measures with either performance, achievement, Dep Loss, or awards.

Utility

Research directed at developing the ideal selection battery for recruiters is a compelling subject to many policy-makers. Indeed, the research attempts mentioned earlier are only selected examples of many government funded attempts to develop the ideal selection instrument with which to pick productive recruiter talent. With military personnel who desire to do well on a test battery, even test batteries with relatively low validities could have utility. Further research to develop such an instrument for the Army is not promising.

Deciding if a selection program has any value to the Army should not be determined solely on the basis of the statistical validities obtained. Even relatively small validity coefficients may support a test's use in certain circumstances. Selection system utility or usefulness is a function of a number of factors in addition to a test's obtained statistical validity (Ghiselli, Campbell, and Zedeck, 1981), including the selection ratio, the percentage of individuals who would have been successful if selected without a test (base rate of success), the actual monetary costs of success on the job, the costs of implementing and operating a selection system, etc.

Although determining the cost effectiveness of the RSB-X was not considered, an assessment was made to determine the usefulness of developing such an instrument based on the most promising of the results obtained. An evaluation of utility indicated that the very small validity indices found in both the RSB-X and most previous selection devices across services (which use personality and/or bio-data) are useful only where highly restrictive selection ratios exist (i.e., Where we wish to select a very few from a large pool of candidates). For example, if 40% of those soldiers chosen to be recruiters would be successful without the selection system, a selection ratio of .2 (selecting only 1 out of 5 individuals eligible to be recruiters) using a selection instrument that has a validity of $\underline{r}$ = .2 would result in 51% successful individuals.

This would clearly be a substantial improvement, but the Army presently assigns about 8 or 9 out of every 10 recruiting duty eligible personnel. Using a system with a validity of $\underline{r}$ = .20 and a realistic selection ratio of .8 would increase the success rate from the previous 40% to only 43%. And considering the research evidence, a selection ratio of .8 and test validity of $\underline{r}$ = .2 are probably optimistic.

Selection Research Implications

The research conclusion that must be drawn, given the relatively small validities expected for such selection devices, despite the large numbers of personnel involved, is that minimal

effects can be expected from the use of recruiter selection devices until a major change is made either in the DA selection process or soldiers' perceptions of the Army recruiter job, or both.

Based on previous research, personality components of most instruments are not predictive of key elements of performance. Across studies, personality does not correlate substantially with achievement, mission adjusted production, or DEP Loss. Within the research literature and industry, personality tests data have been poor predictors of worker performance and this certainly holds true for recruiter performance. Even the initial results that formed the basis for developing the RSB-X instrument reveal that personality measures were not particularly successful when they were used in the Navy and Marine Corps Special Assignment Battery. The initial research primarily validated the instruments against ratings and the indices obtained revealed levels of predictability similar to those found for the RSB-X.

No existing selection instrument has sufficient predictive utility to recommend its use in making decisions about who should become Army recruiters. Although some background items on existing instruments show some replicable relations with performance as it is now defined, any attempts at a future selection strategy should be based on an entirely new set of premises.

Basic Skills Training for Army Recruiters

General

The formal training of all Army recruiters begins at the Recruiting and Retention School (RRS) located at Fort Benjamin Harrison, IN. Devoted entirely to the recruiting and retention functions, the RRS was formally established as an Army school in January of 1983 during a transfer of responsibilities from the Department of Personnel Management to the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC). The stated mission of the RRS is to "train officers and noncommissioned officers in the skills, knowledge, and techniques required to man and sustain the strength of the Total Army" (Nelson, 1987) as well as providing initial training for recruiters and advanced training for supervisors. The Army Recruiter Course (ARC) has existed since 1958 and was originally designed as a three-week course that taught recruiters the rules, regulations, and standards for enlistment operations. In the last thirty years, the course has expanded in both content and length to its present six-week curriculum (Hull & Benedict, 1988).

Although the method of instruction has changed over the years, the content has remained relatively stable. In 1958, the majority of coursework was taught using classroom teaching and the lecture format. Today, a combination of platform instruction, small group instruction, and simulation exercises are the preferred methods. Paramount in this program is a 118-hour Sales Technique/Communication segment in which students actually practice telephone techniques and face-to-face interviews followed by critiques of their behaviors.

In accomplishing its mission, the RRS coordinates with USAREC to ensure that the policies, procedures, and needs of the recruitment function are correctly implemented. All newly assigned recruiters (both detail and volunteer) are provided training during the Army Recruiter Course (ARC).

Evaluation of the Army Recruiter Course

The Army Recruiter Course was subjected to a thorough evaluation in the Spring of 1988 as part of a research project conducted by ARI. The evaluation was one component of a research tasking to provide information to USAREC recruiting manpower and training planners for use in evaluating training, selection, and performance programs. The results of this evaluation address the ARC's (1) course attender qualities, (2) content, (3) instructional strategies, (4) media and materials, (5) instructors, (6) instructional environment, and (7) student evaluation methods (Hull, Kleinman, Allen, and Benedict; 1989).

The overall general results of the evaluation indicate that an excellent training program is being executed by the personnel at the ARC. The course is regarded highly by its students and instructors. The management of the course is rated as excellent, and no major changes to the program are proposed. Some recommendations were made that could improve the existing ARC program, some within the control of the school and some that are not.

The researchers recommended that the realism of telephone and interview simulations used in the ARC be increased. It was also recommended that more examples of good and poor recruiting practices behavior be included in the course (e.g., increased use of videotaped simulations of good and poor behaviors). Better control of classroom temperatures during different parts of the year was encouraged. And, it was proposed that some method be considered to institute student self-pacing throughout the course, allowing the more gifted students to progress more rapidly.

One negative conclusion from the research at the ARC was the finding that the ARC does not realistically prepare its students for the demands and stresses faced by recruiters in the field.

School administrators contend that motivation to perform well during the course could be adversely affected if students were aware of the "real" world. While there is no way to totally prepare a soldier for the demands made for mission accomplishment and the stress that may be created by not achieving goals, it could be argued that a more realistic job preview might enhance a student's interest in perfecting the skills taught during the school. Meta-analysis results (Premack and Wanous, 1985) indicate that realistic job previews can lead to higher performance levels, lower turnover, increased job satisfaction, and increased commitment to the organization.

The most negative finding of the research is not within the control of the school. The lowest rated element of the recruiter training program by on-production graduates of the ARC is the Transitional Training and Evaluation (TT&E) program. This program was rated lower than any existing ARC course element and respondents expressed their concern for the TT&E's lack of implementation in the field.

Training Issues and Problems

Training continuity issues. There are important training continuity issues that need to be effectively addressed. First, the TT&E Program as it exists within USAREC is reported to be non-uniformly implemented. The TT&E program does not appear to have been designed for use as an effective on-the-job training program that would augment the formal Army school training. The majority of effective on-the-job training programs used in private industry have as their cornerstones the concept that formal concept and mastery learning is practiced and reinforced on-the-job. This assumes that a mechanism has been built into into the training system for the exchange of personalized information about each trainee's strengths and weaknesses between the classroom and the on-the-job training program developers. It also presupposes that the formal school curriculum is designed to provide a starting skill proficiency that is consistent with the on-the-job portion.

It seems clear that although both the TRADOC formal schooling programs and the USAREC field training programs exist, they do not share an integrated training system perspective. The Recruiting and Retention School has a mission to provide formal training and receives input from USAREC as to recruiting regulations, policies, and field practices. The USAREC Recruiting Operations training personnel develop and conduct Command sponsored follow-on (or in-service) training after recruiters are returned to the Command following completion of the ARC. The TT&E program, instead of being jointly developed and supported by both Commands is initiated for new recruiters without supportive background information on each individual recruiter's strengths and weaknesses as evidenced during the ARC.

Few successful on-the-job training programs exist today that start with the premise that all participants must be accepted by workplace supervisors as being equally gifted in all subject matter and behavior areas. Even with the best of formal school training, individuals do differ in their abilities to learn new information, execute required behaviors, and transfer concepts taught in a classroom to the job setting. The best source of information that exists about both an individual's strengths and weaknesses is in the training evaluations conducted during the ARC and in the personal observations and evaluations conducted by the ARC instructors. Yet, there is no acceptable mechanism by which this information is provided to USAREC training or supervisory personnel in order to direct or tailor follow-on training program objectives. Instead, a mechanism is bulit into the system for 60 days of evaluation and training for new recruiters' individual weaknesses.

Organizational problems. In 1988 the final results of the research project focusing on basic recruiter training were presented to USAREC (Hull, Kleinman, Allen, and Benedict; 1988). In 1982, the final results of a research project assessing sales training practices and needs within USAREC were also presented to USAREC (Romanczuk, Hernandez, & Colby; 1982). Based on interviews and information obtained in 1988 and 1989, many of the same perceived organizational problems that existed in 1982 may still be affecting recruiter training and productivity today. These organizational problems include:

1) Inadequate policies for selecting recruiters through the DA Assignment process (For example, relying on GT score instead of AFQT as a mental indicator; PCSing OCONUS selectees and family to new duty stations before entering the ARC);

2) Poor or nonimplemented training and coaching of newly assigned field recruiters;

3) Assignment of inexperienced recruiters as Station Commanders;

4) Supervisory personnel who are not familiar with and/or who have not actually participated in the sales process for many years;

5) Using negative reinforcement strategies to improve low performance instead of relying on positive reinforcement (For example, ordering recruiters who can't get one prospect by making five calls to double or triple the nunber of calls thereby increasing their workloads instead of receiving personalized help and training), and;

6) A lack of personal responsibility by Commanders for individual recruiter's failures.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Selection Testing

Many researchers in both the public and private sectors are fierce proponents for the use of measurement instruments (e.g., tests and aptitude batteries) to predict the future success of candidates for job positions. The lure of selection testing will often exist in the minds of individuals who are trying to improve their organization's productivity. Under the proper conditions, selection testing can provide critical insights into individuals' potential for both training program and on-the-job success.

Unfortunately, the situation as it presently exists for staffing USAREC field recruiter positions does not lend itself to selection testing. The DA assignment process negates many of the values of a selection system by imposing a multi-hurdle preselection program into the system. Instead of all soldiers being considered for recruiting assignment, only those who meet certain guidelines are included in the pool of potential candidates. Although certain of the preselection criteria are obviously valid, including minimum time in service, physical condition, and no drug/alcohol dependencies, other criteria seriously limit the pool. Before an effective selection method can be developed, policies will have to change in order to maximize the number of potential candidates. One such change could be that all reenlisting soldiers who meet a limited number of such criteria would be eligible for both recruiting assignment and for assignment to organizations having higher priority in the personnel system. Another change could be the use of AFQT instead of GT scores. As GT scores can be improved through retesting, a better measure of intellectual ability for recruiting assignment could be AFQT.

Even if such changes were enacted today, soldier's perceptions of the recruiter job would make a selection instrument almost impossible to design. If a selection test were devised, one could simply fake bad on the test and avoid the assignment. Unless substantial monetary resources were expended to develop a set of fakeability indexes, the test would be useless. In addition, the costs of establishing, administering, and maintaining a worldwide testing program are prohibitive.

It is our recommendation that no further expenditures be made to develop, validate, or implement a selection testing program at this time. If policies change such that the field recruiter job position becomes such a highly desired specialty that 60-70 percent of applicants can be rejected on the basis of the results from a selection device, then such testing should be reconsidered at that time.

Recruiter Training

Within the limits of our research tasking, we focused on one segment of the field recruiter's training, the Army Recruiter Course. During the process of this research additional information was provided by on-the-job recruiters that was unfavorable to a second training program, the Transitional Training and Evaluation program. It is difficult to assume that any training program exists in a vacuum and is not affected by a multitude of other factors. The Army Recruiter Course, although administered by TRADOC, interacts with USAREC training programs and draws materials, instructors, and direction from activities in the recruiting field. Recipients of training program graduates can be disappointed with the results of training programs because they assume that on-the-job success should always follow successful implementation of a well-conceived training program.

The ARC is a well conceived training program. It implements the existing program of instruction in an exemplary method. However, success in the ARC does not guarantee success on the job. Recruiters are trained in a vacuum, isolated from incompatible factors that can sometimes make it impossible for a person to actually perform a job regardless of how well he/she was trained. Spot inspections, time demands, social pressures by other recruiters to increase or lower performance, defeatist comments by peers, inadequate supervisory skills, etc., all are incompatible with the training provided during the ARC. Combined with a nonuniformly implemented on-the-job training program component, failures are to be expected.

We recommend that data management systems be implemented at Fort Sheridan that will allow the assessment of training effects across USAREC. In addition to USAREC operational data, individual performance and training data will be needed to assess the value of any and all changes to existing training methods, devices, and/or policies. These data must include archived information for all field recruiter personnel who exit from USAREC for any reason.

We recommend that the Transitional Training and Evaluation Program be completely evaluated as soon as possible. It must be determined if it is effective, why it is or is not being implemented uniformly, and if or what improvements need to be initiated. Included in this research must be a consideration of the total process and integration of USAREC's management philosophy and practice, training materials, and conceptual framework from the ARC through the TT&E. On-the-job training programs assume that managers have the technical skills and abilities to provide accurate and current on-the-spot feedback about how and why tasks should be properly executed. This requires that supervisors of field recruiters must be both

technically competent and capable of providing immediate feedback. This also requires that Company Commanders, First Sergeants, Recruiter Training NCOs, and their supervisors all possess enough of these same technical skills to serve as effective training coaches and resource persons.

Although no training program can ensure success for every individual, we propose that a properly developed, evaluated, and monitored program can reduce the probability of failure. Most of society's systems have been resistant to change. It is difficult to get new techniques accepted rapidly as they must be carefully examined. However, proven innovations should be sought out, accepted, and implemented. But even the most carefully designed program is susceptible to failure unless supported by all personnel within an organization. Unless a genuine commitment is made that requires all organizational members to support training as a means to ensure successful mission accomplishment, the successful implementation of any new training program will be doubtful.

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